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Editorials

Diligent FBI work pays off

A tragic week in American history offers at least one note of triumph—the arrest in London of the escaped Missouri convict who is wanted for the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King.

This brings to a partial end one of the most massive manhunts in this nation's history. That the suspect, James Earl Ray, who was armed at the time, was arrested unharmed and without violence is a tribute to the excellent work performed by the FBI, the Canadian Mounted Police, Canada's passport officials and London's Scotland Yard.

Indeed, it was beginning to look like Ray's trail had grown cold and that he had made good his escape despite the highly visible evidence he left at the scene of the crime and despite the international police net which was out to catch him. The search reached into Mexico, Canada, Portugal and Great Britain plus many other countries. Much credit should be given to the Mounted Police which examined more than 300,000 passport photographs before they found Ray's. And, of course, main credit should go to the FBI for another superb investigative job.

His capture by no means solves the mystery of the assassination. Ray himself remains in a London jail awaiting extradition to the United States for trial on one or all of the three charges pending against him. His motive—if he proves to be the killer—remains to be established; also the existence of any accomplices or the existence of a conspiracy against the slain civil rights leader. Evidence also suggests this assassination case may involve others who hired King's assailant to do the brutal deed.

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